

A-E CONTRACTING BULLETIN 97-15, 20 OCT 97

SUBJECT: Organizational Certifications

1. Many professional organizations sponsor certification programs, such as Certified Photogrammetrist (American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing), Certified Inshore Hydrographer (American Congress on Surveying and Mapping), Certified Construction Specifier (Construction Specifications Institute) or Certified Cost Engineer (Association for Advancement of Cost Engineering). Such certifications shall not be included as mandatory requirements in public announcements for A-E services, even if "required" or directed by a customer. Requiring organizational certifications is unduly restrictive, appears to promote a particular private organization, and may invite a successful challenge.

2. Don't confuse *organizational certification* with *professional registration* (also called licensure in some states). Professional registration of engineers, architects, landscape architects and surveyors is done by states, not private organizations, and is a mandatory requirement of Federal A-E contracts (FAR 52.236-25).

3. Organizational certifications may still be considered when evaluating professional qualifications, as follows. Personnel having relevant certifications may be given additional points or consideration in the same way as advanced degrees, relevant training, years of experience, longevity with the current firm and number of relevant projects are treated. Hence, a public announcement could say something similar to the following: "The evaluation of professional qualifications will consider education, training, professional registration, organizational certifications, overall and relevant experience, and longevity with the firm." But, do not refer to the certification of a particular organization, association or society.

4. This bulletin has been coordinated with the Office of the Chief Counsel and the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting.

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